

## THE TROY HERALD.

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## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

CHARLES COUNTY, MD.,  
December 24, 1874.

Dear Herald: This county was one of the very earliest settled in the state. Though the first actual settlement, exclusive of a trading post in Kat county, on the eastern shore, was made in St. Mary's county a few miles below the line of this county, here Leonard Calvert landed in a early part of 1634, with two hundred settlers. So many emigrants loomed that same year on this side of the Wicomico river that the territory or several miles around was set off as a separate "hundred." Leonard Calvert was proprietary governor under his elder brother, Cecilus (Cerv), second Lord Baltimore, who was Lord proprietor of the province of Maryland under the charter granted to his father by Charles I. Governor Calvert passed through this county, before he made a prominent settlement in St. Mary's, and was as far as an Indian village where proper Marlborough now stands, on meeting with as welcome a reception as he expected from the Indian chief, he deemed it prudent to turn and settle nearer his base of supplies. Port Tobacco, the county at of this county, a village of some three hundred inhabitants, was probably settled the same year. Of this is published records give no information, but when I lived there, immediately after the late war, I saw one of the old books of records, which the federal soldiers, during the occupancy of the court house, had mutilated and scattered about the building, the first entry of which recorded the meeting of "ye honorable body" of the county commissioners on the 5th of February, 1664 and the first of the reign of Charles I. It was then called Charles County. Its present name is derived from its Indian name, Potomac, signifying a village between hills. It was one of the principal villages of the Piscataways, the most powerful of all the Maryland tribes. It is situated on a creek that leads to the Potomac, and one hundred years ago ships which sailed directly to Europe anchored in the center of the town; but now the creek has dried up until the nearest water is three miles off.

Charles county was organized in 1658, about the close of Cromwell's administration. Its people, at that time staunch royalists and hater of the puritan Roundheads, boldly avowed their political sentiment by naming the new county after Charles, whom Cromwell had beheaded no years before. Its history has always been a proud one. Its southern early colonial wars, and in the four great struggles since that it always responded to the call of its country. It furnished the commander (Gen. Wm. Smallwood), a large part of the famous Maryland line, in the Revolution. One of its citizens signed the Declaration of Independence, and many of them have gained distinction in the legislative and diplomatic service of the government. Its people of to-day are noted for intelligence, a chivalrous sense of honor and princely hospitality. The farms, except where subdivided, preserve the original boundaries, which are never straight, but are curved and crooked to a wonderful degree. A plot of some of the farms here would be a curiosity to those accustomed to the straight lines of government surveys, as we have them. It was a custom, in vogue as late as half a century ago, for the proprietor of the land, when having his boundary surveyed, to have his sons between seven and fifteen years of age soundly whipped at each corner stone. It was thought that then they would never forget the locality. An old gentleman whom I used to know in Canton, Mo., was some years

ago visiting the home of his childhood in Prince George's county. A relative of his, who owned the old homestead, thinking it possible that he might still retain some recollection of the boundaries, asked him, one day, if he knew where a certain corner stood that had been removed some forty years before. Having given a graphic and minute description of it, which, if correct, would establish the ownership of the interrogator to several acres in dispute, he was asked if he were certain of his recollection. "Of course I am," said he; "my father whipped me at the corner stone." Every farm here has a name, given it by its original proprietor, by which it is known in the title deeds. The one from which I write, in possession of my ancestors how many generations no one knows, is called "Hickory Thicket," though why is not now apparent, as it contains not a single specimen of that tree; but it may have been different two hundred and forty years ago. Just adjoining, and scarcely a stone's throw away, is "Stony Hill," where J. Wilkes Booth came in that memorable night with his broken leg, the setting of which cost his host a trial for his life before a military commission and a four years' torture upon the burning sands of the Dry Tortugas.

Charles county has changed but little since I last visited it, and that little is not in the line of improvement, but evinces what has been a gradual, but now quite perceptible, deterioration of farming interests. The effects of the abolition of slavery were felt very heavily in this part of the state, not because of the difference in the cost of free and slave labor—for at the prices now ruling free labor is as cheap as slave labor could be—but because the operations of the farmer and his calculations were principally based upon the fact that a large amount of property was represented by slaves, and the abolition of the system caused the abstraction of so much capital. Labor is cheap here, because the farmer is unable to pay a greater rate and the supply is greater than the demand. Tobacco is the principal crop; in fact the only one relied upon to bring an income. I can't help thinking this a mistake, and this view is taken by many intelligent farmers with whom I have conversed. Tobacco is a very expensive crop, requiring a great deal of labor and the use of costly fertilizers; and its production is a positive injury to the soil. Our farmers, with a soil much more fertile than this, and one much more easily cultivated, have long since appreciated the folly of taking all from the land and giving nothing in return. Some of the granges of Prince George's county are trying to initiate a system of cultivating more grain and grass to be fed upon the farm, and less tobacco; but in this county they have confined themselves to the operation of a co-operative retail store. An agent will buy in Baltimore everything that is needed by the members of the grange, and at the conclusion of the weekly meeting each one can be seen with his bundles, under his arm, of sugar, coffee, soda, etc., and infinitely that have been parceled out to him. And would you believe it? they get most of their Christmas whiskey that way. The patrons of the store have fully tried this experiment and proved its impracticability—without previous damages, which are never straight, but are curved and crooked to a wonderful degree. A plot of some of the farms here would be a curiosity to those accustomed to the straight lines of government surveys, as we have them. It was a custom, in vogue as late as half a century ago, for the proprietor of the land, when having his boundary surveyed, to have his sons between seven and fifteen years of age soundly whipped at each corner stone. It was thought that then they would never forget the locality. An old gentleman whom I used to know in Canton, Mo., was some years

wheeled carts, similar to such as I have heard were used by the old French inhabitants of St. Charles. Some of the older settlers of our county may have seen something of the kind. Again, they use at least four times the labor that we do in gathering the corn crop. The stalks are cut and shocked. After the fodder is cured, the corn in the full husk is pulled from it and thrown in piles, and the fodder hauled to the barn. The corn is then gathered up and hauled to the barn yard. All this by the two-wheeled cart and the lilliputian steers, managed by a driver whose lexicon is one of the curiosities. Then comes the husking match and frolic, than which the average Charles countian would sooner forego his Christmas festivities, and this is saying a great deal. Then the corn is carefully assorted according to soundness and length of ear—the poorest to be fed to the cattle, the middle grade to the hogs, and the best, which is of a very superior quality, to be ground into meal for table use—the whole put into a strong crib and guarded by a huge lock and key. Many other instances might be mentioned. The efforts made in this vicinity to establish a system of a greater diversity of farm products have not been successful, and their failure has confirmed many in the belief that such a scheme is impracticable, but I doubt the correctness of this conclusion, for the reason that the efforts in this direction were made by persons not qualified for the purpose. They were new comers and not familiar with the properties of the soil, being from the North, had too high an appreciation of their own knowledge to seek the advice of their neighbors. More than that, they lacked the necessary capital to carry out the plan to its legitimate conclusion, having expended it in the purchase of land. The ill-success of these parties has entirely stopped the immigration that would otherwise be attracted to a country possessing so many natural advantages—a fact greatly to be regretted, for immigration is one of the great needs of this country. I have heard of only one northern man who has been benefited by purchasing land here. He bought a farm, not many miles from this, containing a thousand acres of land, naturally thin, but which had been carefully treated, paying therefor twenty thousand dollars. After heavily manuring, he secured a fine stand of grass and clover (this country can naturally beat the world on red clover). He looked about for purchasers, and came across four northern men who wished to purchase a large farm. He made an appointment for them to visit him on a certain day the following week, and returned home to put things in order. There was a water-power grist mill on the place, which he immediately stopped, so that the grain might accumulate, to represent a large patronage. On the appointed day the prospective purchasers found everything as neat as a new pin, the mill, which had just been started, overran with custom, and the farm blooming and green, greatly in contrast with its neighbors. A bargain was struck at once at thirty-two thousand dollars, most of it cash. They were not able to raise the balance of the purchase money, and the first Yankee not long since closed them out.

After saying so much, I must tell of something in which this county is far ahead of ours. I refer to the management of the public roads. The law of this state places the matter entirely under the control of the county commissioners (corresponding in the main to our county court). This county has been trying for several years to perfect a system for repairing the roads, and it has succeeded to such an extent that in a few years it will have the best roads in the world. The cost is not large either—about the same in proportion that is expended in our county. This is a larger county than Lincoln, and it appropriated for work on the roads and bridges, the present year, nine

thousand dollars, while that of Lincoln county, was, in round numbers, eight thousand dollars. The people here found out that the working out of the road tax was money thrown away to no purpose, and discontinued; just as we know it at home, but still keep up the practice, because our legislature has yet given us no relief. This county is divided into four road districts, with a supervisor for each, whose duty it is to keep a stated number of hands on the road from the first of May until the first of December. The work has to be properly done or the supervisor is liable to discharge and proceeding by indictment. This system has been in operation four or five years, and about half the roads in this district are as good as our best gravelled roads.

The public school system of this state is also much better than ours. The law is such that its operation secures a first-class school in each district ten months in the year. The efficiency of the schools in this county is somewhat impaired by the miserably low salary that is paid teachers. At the current rates here, a teacher, if he loses no time, has no doctor's bill to pay, and is an adept in the art of economy, will be no poorer at the end, than he was at the beginning, of the season.

I see that a convention has been called in Missouri and an election for delegates ordered. I hope that judicious, non-partisan men, will be selected who will frame a suitable constitution. If Lincoln sends any one of those already spoken of in that connection, she will not, in my opinion, make a mistake. It is not an easy matter to make a good constitution. This state made a new constitution in 1864 when but few of its citizens were allowed to vote. When the disfranchisement was done away with a constitution was immediately called in 1867. Every single member of the convention was a Democrat. This county sent three of its very ablest men. Yet several changes were made that were the reverse of reforms and many blunders were made, the most glaring and mischievous of which I will mention. The second article of the Declaration of Rights surrenders all state rights. It reads: "The constitution of the United States, and the laws made, or which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, are, and shall be, the supreme law of the state; and the judges of this state, and all the people of this state, are, and shall be bound thereby; anything in the constitution or law of this state to the contrary, notwithstanding." How is that for good old Democratic doctrine?

The weather so far has been glorious; mild and pleasant, no snow and but little rain.

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all the readers of the Herald.

Miss Ada Johnson, Mess. C. E. Wright, E. L. Wells, J. P. Wells and F. Wyatt, of St. Louis, paid our town a visit during the holidays.

**FIRE.**—During the absence of Mun. Thomson and family from their home last Friday night, the house and all the provisions and clothing of the family were burned.

How a little Baskett transformed an excellent lady friend of ours into a grandmother, in Mexico, on Christmas day, has been made very plain. Mrs. Morrison can tell you all about it. We believe they have concluded to call it Cecil.

Dr. A. E. Noel has opened an office in the room over the tailor shop between the stores of Parker Crews & Co. and Woolfolk & Gordon, for the practice of dentistry. Dr. Noel has had fifteen or more years experience in dentistry, and will insure satisfaction to all who desire his services.

For additional locals see 4th and 6th pages.

## POSTAGE.

Postage on all periodicals must now be prepaid by the publisher at the office where mailed. We will pay postage on all copies of the Herald now leaving this office, until the time subscribed and paid for has expired, after which time subscribers must send the amount of postage—about 15 cents per annum—with the subscription price of the paper. No papers sent outside the county unless paid for in advance. Copies of the Herald now being sent to post offices outside of the county, and on which there are arrearages, will be discontinued after this week, until all delinquencies are paid, and advance payments with postage made. There will be no postage on copies of the Herald delivered at any post office in the county.

With this number the Herald enters upon its tenth volume. Laying aside vain-glorious promises and prospectus for the new year, we will only say that it will be our aim to make the Herald a worthy and reliable journal, both locally and politically.

**FIRE.**—As we started to press the frame dwelling on the corner of Court and Collier streets, the property of Mrs. Ponsalot, occupied by Mr. Graff, caught fire and was totally consumed. Most of the furniture was saved. Loss \$600 or \$700; no insurance. The activity of our citizens, favored by a calm day, prevented the fire from spreading, which was almost a miracle, considering the number of frame buildings surrounding it, and their close proximity.

## MARRIED.

**WORTHAM-BUTLER.**—Dec. 20, 1874, at Roseman City, Montana Territory, Mr. P. P. Wortham and Miss M. E. Butler.  
**BIRKHEAD-GUTHRIE.**—Dec. 9, 1874, at the residence of Messrs. Alloway & Bros., by Rev. W. F. Luck, Mr. J. Wesley Birkhead and Miss Laura C. Guthrie, all of this county.  
**THURMAN-POWELL.**—Dec. 24, 1874, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. W. T. Powell, by Rev. J. B. Allen, Mr. Thomas J. Thurman and Miss Minnie Powell, all of this county.  
**MOTLEY-STONE.**—Dec. 24, 1874, at the residence of the bride's mother, Mrs. Mary Stone, by Mr. R. S. Duncan, Mr. W. B. Motley and Miss Mary A. Stone, all of this county.  
**PAKKE-DAY.**—Dec. 24, 1874, at the residence of A. J. Dixon, Esq., in Louisville, Mo., by Rev. I. A. M. Thompson, Mr. Samuel Pakke and Miss Mary J. Day, all of this county.

## DIED.

**ZIMMERMAN.**—Dec. 27, 1874, in New Hope, Mrs. Dinah Zimmerman, aged 73 years. The close of a life so pious and useful could not be other than peaceful and happy. In her last illness she was sustained and comforted by an unflinching trust in Christ, and frequently expressed the desire to depart and be with Him.  
"None knew her but to love,  
None named her but to praise."  
M.

**Dr. W. W. BIRKHEAD,**  
DENTIST,  
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Will be found at his office in Troy from the 1st to the 15th of each month. Will be found at his office in Clarksville from the 15th to the 30th.

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